

# NIAGARA FALLS PHILATELIST.

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## PHILATELY TWO HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW.

WE live in the nineteenth century, and we belong to it, every surrounding, every pleasure is a member of it, and will always be associated with it; it is but natural that we should accept things as they are, without looking too thoroughly into the far future. But why should we not for once overstep the boundary of the present, and live a few minutes with our great-great-grand-children in the twenty-one hundredth century, looking into the progress of our great common pleasure, Philately.

Let us imagine ourselves carefully examining an album of that date, criticising the latest Greenland stamp, comparing the engraving of this beautiful specimen from Patagonia, with that from Ireland; let us, I say, put aside all the common sense thoughts of where we are, and undo the chains which bind down our imagination; only giving ourselves a brief respite, while the tiresome facts are gone over.

It is now only forty-five years since the first postage stamp was issued in England, and yet we find ourselves in a labyrinth of stamps coming from here and there, each month the complication grows larger and stronger, and the beginner looks forward in absolute dismay, to the 7,000 stamps behind him and the 25,000 before him. "Will it do," he says, "to buy old issues and let the new ones go? Why, yes, the older are constantly getting farther and farther beyond my reach. I will ignore the 'new comers' and confine myself to

those issued before 1860, or at least to those which are moderately old." A few years pass, he sees the "new comers" triple their former value, and again comes the question, "why did I not buy those when they were common?" Thus it goes on, a never ending stream of stamps, closing up at last as the forward ranks are conquered. Confining ourselves to figures in the rough, we find that in the year 1884, there were in all about 700 stamps, postals, envelopes and wrappers issued; let us not take this as an average, but be safe and make the common number 500; we have before us these two hundred years, making the number 100,000 without our present sum, adding this, our total shows 107,000 stamps, all different, exclusive of the thousands of varieties which are bound to come, owing to mistakes in engraving, etc., etc.; this immense number makes a complete collection impossible, and to hold the majority would take a lifetime, for example: it takes the average man about one year to collect one thousand stamps, unless he is attended with unusual advantages for obtaining them, in the shape of a large bank account, or numerous friends abroad, on this scale to collect the half, viz: 50,000 stamps, would take 50 years; 25 years, should 2,000 a year be collected, and 10 should 5,000 annually fall to his lot. Of course collections could be handed down from one generation to another, but in this great lapse of time, the number lost would be immense. these heirlooms playing